Migration Problems in Central Asia

by Emomali Akilov

DUSHANBE, Tajikistan, May 18 – Though in recent times Tajikistan has not been a large player on the world stage, it once lay on the ancient silk route and held an important place in the global economy. However, new economic growth in the former Soviet Republic has been robust in recent years.

These positive developments have made Tajikistan an attractive destination for residents of its poorer neighbours. Since independence in 1990 Tajikistan has become prosperous and wealthy, compared to the other countries in the region. Growth is so strong that the country is experiencing labor shortages, despite relatively large scale immigration. Hence, one would expect that immigrants from neighbouring countries, like Kyrgyzstan, would find a warm reception here. The reality is slightly different.

Like Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan is also a landlocked and mountainous country. It shares borders with China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Due to recent economic and political instability, waves of Kyrgyz have immigrated in recent years to neighboring states like Tajikistan. Kyrgyz immigrants bring with them a different language, different customs, and a distinct sense of identity which many of the Kyrgyz seek to preserve. The Kyrgyz immigrants say they came to Tajikistan seeking education, employment, and a better life.

But there are many Tajiks who feel that Tajikistan is already crowded enough. "If there must be immigration," said Alikbek Machmetov — a local from Dushanbe, "those who come to Tajikistan should abandon their ways and adopt our customs, our values and our language."

Recently the government of Tajikistan began to make attempts to stem the flow of immigrants, in response to growing anti-immigrant sentiment. However with 20% of the former population of Kyrgyzstan living within its borders, the question of how to deal with its newest residents is not one likely to go away any time soon.

(from "The Central Asian Observer", Mai 18, 1994)

"Black Gold" and Governmental Regulations in Central Pacific

by Joseph J. Anefal

BANABA, Mai 29 – Chuuk state is a small island nation located in the central tropical Pacific Ocean with Banaba as its capital and a population of about 53,000 people. Although a small nation, Chuuk state has many laws and regulations, especially ones that effect industry. These regulations are very comprehensive and traditional, some of which have been in place for over 40 years. According to the present government these regulations are still necessary to protect the environment and the health of the inhabitants. However, things change.

For decades, the island's economy has been based on fishing and support from the International Monetary Fund and other international sources. But recently the petroleum industry has discovered the island. As it turns out, the island possesses enormous crude oil reserves. Now, many companies like Morey Oil South Pacific, Royal Dutch Shell, and Exxon are trying to persuade the government to allow them to set up on-shore and off-shore drilling operations and to build oil refineries on the island. For now, Chuuk state laws would make it difficult for these companies to operate.

The oil companies are offering to pay large sums of money for the rights to extract oil from Chuuk territory, and many on this cash-strapped island see the discovery of oil as a boon for the country. There is now a movement among the islanders to eliminate the governmental regulations of industry entirely, so that Chuuk state can share the economic benefits of this unexpected discovery. The supporters argue that allowing foreign firms to set up operations will prove lucrative for Chuuk state, eliminating its dependence on international donors and allowing the government to undertake many new initiatives. "New schools, new housing and new independence!" proclaims Masao Urusemal. And he is not the only one, as the movement to deregulate industry is quickly gaining support among the islanders.

(from "The Independent Observer", July 29 1995)

New Tensions in South-Eastern Africa

by Ismail Omar Guelleh

DJIBOUTI, Sept. 12 – Located in the Horn of Africa, Djibouti is bordered by Eritrea in the north and Ethiopia in the west and south. The remainder of the border is formed by the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. On the other side of the Red Sea, on the Arabian Peninsula, 20 km from the coast of Djibouti, is Yemen. Despite being bordered by states which have had hostilities with each other for years, Djibouti has largely been spared from bloody conflicts. However it has not been without troubles of its own.

Recently, a radical movement has sprung up among the Issa, one of the two main ethnic groups living in Djibouti. The movement, known as "Kishangi" advocates broad social and political change, seeking to alter almost all aspects of the society, including the values that have been dominant for generations. "We want to replace the existing political system with a new and different system, one which will bring us into the next century. The people are with us, and their voice will not be ignored" says Mouna-Hodan Ahmed, one of the leading figures of the new movement.

In opposition to this movement the Afari - the other major ethnic group - seek to keep in place existing traditions and institutions. The Afari are resistant to any change or reform of the system. "We are confident that this new movement among the Issa will not bring our country any further" says Reesom Haile, deputy Prime Minister and a member of the ruling party. Haile also described Ahmed as a "charlatan" and a "conman" and accused him of fomenting civil unrest.

Supporters of both sides are growing more vocal and the politics of this costal state become more polarized each day. It is difficult to say what will happen next, as both the traditionalists and the radicals have strong support from the population and as conflict between the two sides seems to be worsening.

(from "The International Observer", September 12 1995)

Appendix S2. Column letters from Study 2, presented in the study order.

November 24, 2003

Dear A.:

My husband, "Ralph," has one sister, "Dawn," and one brother, "Curt." Their parents died six years ago, within months of each other.

Ever since, Dawn has once a year mentioned buying a headstone for their parents. I'm all for it, but Dawn is determined to spend a bundle on it, and she expects her brothers to help foot the bill. She recently told me she had put \$2,000 aside to pay for it.

Recently Dawn called to announce that she had gone ahead, selected the design, written the epitaph and ordered the headstone. Now she expects Curt and Ralph to pay "their share" back to her. She said she went ahead and ordered it on her own because she has been feeling guilty all these years that her parents didn't have one.

I feel that since Dawn did this all by herself, her brothers shouldn't have to pay her anything. I know that if Curt and Ralph don't pay her back, they'll never hear the end of it, and neither will I. What should I do about this?

_

March 5, 2002

Dear A.:

I am close friends with a couple I'll call "Angie" and "Gil." I met them at the same time and have always been unattached while they are a married couple. This didn't matter, and we hit it off right away.

The problem is, when Angie gets mad at Gil for whatever reason, she wants me to be mad, too. She thinks I should take sides, and this makes me uncomfortable because they are both my friends. Gil has never asked me to take sides with him.

Angie has gone so far as to request that I ignore any attempts by Gil to contact me if they are fighting. (He never does.) I feel bad for him and like I am betraying a friend by agreeing to do as she asks. I don't know how to explain to her that as they are both my friends, I would rather be left out of their arguments and not have to choose sides.

Am I wrong to be friends with a couple? Is this inviting trouble because I am single?

_

August 17, 2004

Dear A.:

I am recently married, and every night my husband "tells" me when it's time for us to retire for the night. This can be anytime from 9:30 to 11:30 p.m.

If I tell him -- which is not often -- that I am ready for bed before he is, he gets upset. However, if he is ready to go to bed, and I tell him I'd like to finish a book I'm reading or watch a little more TV, he gets upset.

When I try to talk to him about this, he says that married men and women should go to bed "together," period! But, it is always on his timetable. What about mine? Needless to say, we have both gone to bed angry.

How do we deal with this without both of us getting angry and resenting each other?